

Detained Astrakhan Mayor Must Pick Temporary Replacement

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The mayor of the southern Russian city of Astrakhan, who was detained Wednesday on suspicion of accepting a bribe, will have to appoint his own temporary replacement, a city official said.

Mayor Mikhail Stolyarov is the only person who has the right to choose an acting mayor, said Kanat Shantimirov, head of the regional governor's office.

The Astrakhan city Duma confirmed Thursday that its members will not be participating in the selection of an interim mayor because their involvement would contravene the city's charter.

The charter does not say who should become acting mayor under the current circumstances, and because Stolyarov is still mayor, he will have to make the choice himself.

He is expected to choose from one of his four deputies in the near future, RIA Novosti reported.

Stolyarov is suspected of extorting 10 million rubles (\$300,000) from businessmen for the allocation of building contracts. Stolyarov was detained upon receiving the funds and faces bribery charges carrying a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison.

Stolyarov, a member of United Russia, was chief executive of power company Astarkhanenergo from 1999 to 2009, before serving as deputy mayor of Astrakhan from 2009 to 2011.

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